

Good morning everyone.

Today is the Feast of Pentecost, otherwise known as Whitsunday, when we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the gathered disciples, empowering them to go out with the good news of the risen Jesus. There are communion services today at Hurley at 9.30am and Kingsbury at 11am. The video worship was filmed at St Michael and All Angels, Wood End.

<https://youtu.be/vsJzMaDn63I>



## Pentecost 2021

A Service for the Feast of Pentecost (23 May 2021) from the Kingsbury and Baxterley Group of Parishes. The service was filmed in the Church of St Michael and...

[youtu.be](https://youtu.be/vsJzMaDn63I)

Attached you will find the text of Revd Carole's reflection, and also the weekly newsletter. You will see that next week is Trinity Sunday, and there will be a Group Service at Kingsbury at 11am. I am hoping that we will be able to gather outside in the churchyard, so that our worship can be accompanied by the singing of hymns, which is still not permitted indoors. That, of course, is dependent upon the weather, but I think we must be due some fine weather by now! Next Sunday is also the deadline for applications to be entered onto the electoral roll, in preparation for our annual meetings. If you are already on the electoral role for one of our churches, you don't need to do anything (unless you would like your name removed), but if you are not and would like to be, or would like to know more, let me know as soon as possible.

With my prayers and best wishes

John

Revd Dr John White

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## **Sermon for Pentecost – 23/05/21**

**Readings: Acts 2. 1-21 and John 15. 26-27, 16. 4b-15**

Today is the Day of Pentecost, so Happy Birthday to the Church!

Jesus had promised the disciples an Advocate, and this is the day that Advocate in the form of the Holy Spirit arrived, bringing the gifts the disciples would need for their onward journey in spreading Christianity throughout the world. Prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit, those first disciples could do very little, so today is celebrated as the birthday of the church, the first day on which those first disciples were equipped to do the work that needed to be done.

In the account from Acts, Jerusalem was filled with people from every nation, all speaking their native language of course, but they were amazed when suddenly, they could understand what everyone else was saying. And it wasn't because they were all drunk at 9.30 in the morning! Because they weren't! (It definitely wasn't new wine – drunk people just talk gibberish as far as I can tell from my limited knowledge!) It must have been an extremely weird feeling, and one can have sympathy with their perplexity. Imagine for example *our* being suddenly able to understand Chinese or Slovenian. Or, even closer to home, a Cockney understanding Scouse, a Brummie understanding Glaswegian and vice versa. (Note – there is nothing wrong with any of the dialects I've just mentioned!).

It was the final of the Eurovision song contest last night, and I must confess I am pretty glad most countries mainly sang their songs in English – for English speaking peoples, the gift of 'speaking in tongues' was not necessary. Gone are the days when for the most part, songs were sung in the language of the country represented, so it was subtitles that let us know what was being sung about. I wonder what those first disciples would have made of this particular contest? Who knows, maybe they had something similar..... As usual, I digress, so back to the many gifts that the Holy Spirit can convey, and it seems that on that day when the church was born, although it is promoted as the gift of 'speaking in tongues', perhaps it was maybe more the gift of understanding that was bestowed. And it is this gift of understanding that I'm interested in, and I'm wondering if it is more like knowing what is meant rather than proper linguistic knowledge?

Of course the gift of understanding works in conjunction with the gift of being able to teach. If I were to give the instruction 'K1, P1, K2 tog, P1, K1 to end' – not everyone will understand how that works in practice although many will understand what it means if given in context. But the knitters amongst us will know what it means and understand how to put it into practice to create a garment – they may even be able to teach us 'how'!

Another tricky language might be music – all those little black dots, some with tails, some without, on a series of lines on a page. The written language of music might seem to be a load of gobbledygook on a page if we are not well versed in musical symbols, and yet, when we listen to music, we don't need to have learned the written notation to understand it. Well at least we understand enough to know whether we like it or not – choral v- jazz, soul v- reggae for instance. It may be that we like all of those genres of music, at the right time and in the right place.

The music for a ballet or an opera conveys the meaning of the story even without the movements of the ballet dancers or the words of the operatic singers. Even without words or physical movement, if we listen to say 'Fingles Cave' from the Hebrides Overture, we can hear the waves crashing on the rocks, and the same for Rimsky Korsakov's 'Flight of the Bumblebee', one can definitely hear the bees buzzing around! Now I'm not saying that by calling on the Holy Spirit and asking for the gift of understanding to be bestowed on us will mean that we will then be able to understand absolutely everything in the universe – I don't think it quite works like that. And anyway, according to the Hitch-hikers guide to the galaxy, the answer to the meaning of life is '42', so what more could we need to know?

Well, what we do need to know is that the gifts of the Spirit are bestowed according to what the Spirit discerns we need, not what we think we need. Yes, it would perhaps be nice to be able to speak Welsh, but unless the Spirit discerns that it is a gift I actually need, then I am not going to be instantly able to speak that language. It is going to take time and effort on my behalf to learn the language in the conventional way

(and I am trying to learn Welsh at the moment so I can order fish and chips when I go on holiday there later in the year.)

But if the Spirit discerns that any of us is in need of a particular gift, then when that gift is needed to be used, we can be sure that it will be bestowed upon us, when we ask, when we pray. We *can* see in other people the gifts from the Spirit that have been bestowed upon them, just as the people in Jerusalem saw the effect of the gift of understanding bestowed that first day when the Holy Spirit was sent by God, as Jesus had promised.

In John's Gospel, Jesus said that the Advocate was the 'Spirit of Truth' – 'when the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth'. This was not just for the original disciples – but a truth for us all now, today.

At baptism and confirmation, the Holy Spirit comes upon each candidate and then there is a feeling of calm. We might have noticed that when a crying baby is baptised, as soon as the trauma of the splashy bit is over, then the baby generally stops crying and is peaceful, sometimes even falling asleep – the Holy Spirit at work within them. And all the gifts that we show forth in our lives each day is living testament that the Holy Spirit is alive and well and working within us. I find much comfort in that, and I hope and pray that we can all find comfort, peace and understanding – those precious gifts from the Holy Spirit. In the words of St. Peter (from 1 Peter 4.10) 'Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received'.

Amen

### **Keep Singing from Sarah**

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are keeping well.

Please find the music suggestions below to accompany Pentecost.

288 - Holy Spirit, come, confirm us - [Holy Spirit, Come, Confirm Us - YouTube](#)

114 - Come down, O love divine - [DOWN AMPNEY-COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE - YouTube](#)

127 - Come, thou Holy Spirit, come - [Come, Thou Holy Spirit, Come - YouTube](#)

541 - O thou who camest from above - [O Thou Who Camest From Above : Rochester Cathedral Choir - YouTube](#)

Some more -

Spirit of the living God - [Spirit Of The Living God - YouTube](#)

Holy Spirit, come to me - [Holy Spirit, Come to Me - YouTube](#)

Wa, wa, wa emimimo (Come, O Holy Spirit, come) - [Wa Wa Wa Emimimo \(Come, O Holy Spirit\) \(Nigeria\) - YouTube](#)

O for a closer walk with God - [O for a closer walk - Charles Villiers Stanford, John Rutter, Wayne Marshall, The Cambridge Singers - YouTube](#)

Dum complerentur dies pentecostes Palestrina - [Motets: Dum Complerentur Dies Pentecostes - YouTube](#)

O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit Tallis - [Tallis: O Lord, Give Thy Holy Spirit - YouTube](#)

My peace I leave you - [Taizé - My peace - YouTube](#)

We are sending lots of best wishes to you all again this week. We have been getting back into our old routines of school, work and activities with Phoebe starting after school track training and Emily finally able to go back to singing lessons in person rather than over zoom. They are both very happy with the new arrangements :-)

We are hoping, like everyone, for some better weather especially as i need to start running training again now that my knee has recovered from injury....the 10k races this summer will come around very quickly I am sure and its been a long time since I did that far!

As I write we are getting ready to watch the Eurovision song contest!! The girls are looking forward to it and planning to try to guess all of the scoring too.....wish me luck...it could be a long evening!

Hoping to see you soon  
Lots of Love  
Sarah and family xxxx